

**Preliminary Amendment of U.S. National Stage for International Application
PCT/EP/2004/002440 filed March 10, 2004**

In the Specification:

Please amend the English language translation submitted herewith of instant Specification, without prejudice, as follows:

Please delete all text above line 1 of page 1, including the heading “Field of the Invention” and replace the deleted matter with the following new section headings and title of the invention:

--TITLE OF THE INVENTION

Ethercarboxylic Acid Ester of Sterol or Stanol

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application claims priority under 35 USC § 365 from International Application PCT/EP2004/002440, filed on March 10, 2004, which claims priority from German Application No. 103 12 000.9, filed on March 19, 2003.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Technical Field--

At page 1, line 6, please delete the subheading “Prior Art” and replace it with the following subheading:

--Background Art--

At page 2 line 22, please delete the heading “Description of the Invention”, and replace it with the following heading::

--BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION--

At page 3, line 21, that is, in the line above the subheading “**Sterols and Stanols**”, insert the following new heading:

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--DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION--

At page 17, line 1, please delete "CLAIMS", and replace it with:

--What is claimed is:--.

On a separate, new page 19, please add the following new section heading and paragraph containing an Abstract of the Disclosure:

--ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

The disclosed invention relates to sterol and/or stanol esters of ethercarboxylic acids corresponding to general formula (I): $R(OAlk)_nOCH_2COOH$, in which R is a C_{1-50} alkyl, alkenyl and/or alkylphenyl group derived from an alcohol, OAlk stands for ring-opened ethylene oxide, propylene oxide and/or butylene oxide units and n is a number of 0 to 100, and to a process for making said sterols and stanols. The inventive sterols and stanols have a number of uses, including as steroid precursors, as emulsifiers and as a hypocholesterolaemic active component of foods.--